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Intelligence Information Cable

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1. THERE HAS BEEN NEAR UNANIMOUS PRAISE BY SOUTH
VIETNAMESE LEADERS FOR NORTH VIETNAMESE GENERAL VO NGUYEN GIAP'S
PLAN OF ATTACK, WHICH WAS BRILLIANTLY CONCEIVED AND AUDACIOUSLY
EXECUTED. HOWEVER IN RETROSPECT, THERE WERE ALSO SERIOUS ERRORS
IN THE PLAN. THE LACK OF ARTILLERY IN THE ATTACK ON SAIGON IS

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SOMEWHAT SURPRISING. A NUMBER OF THEORIES ARE ADVANCED, ONE
BEING THE DISCOVERY OF A LARGE ARTILLERY CACHE BY THE AMERICANS.

ANOTHER ATTRIBUTES THE ABSENCE OF ARTILLERY TO THE ELIMINATION
OF A NUMBER OF KEY ENEMY LEADERS IN THE EARLY STAGES
OF THE ATTACK, CAUSING A BREADOWN IN COMMAND DECISIONS.
IN OTHER WORDS, FOR POLITICAL REASONS, THE VIET CONG (VC)/
NORTH VIETNAMESE (DRV) LEADERS WANTED TO HOLD OFF ON THE USE OF
ARTILLERY IN ORDER NOT TO JEOPARDIZE THE HOPE THAT THE POPULACE
WOULD RISE AND SUPPORT THEM. POSSIBLY, IT IS CONJECTURED, IF THIS
PART OF THE PLAN FAILED, A COMMAND DECISION COULD BE MADE TO BRING
UP SUPPORTING FIREPOWER. HOWEVER, BY THE TIME THE LACK OF A POPULAR
UPRISING BECAME APPARENT, KEY ENEMY LEADERS HAD EITHER BEEN KILLED
OR PUT TO FLIGHT OR WERE WITHOUT COMMUNICATIONS WITH THEIR TROOPS.

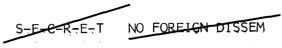
2. MANY GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN) OFFICIALS FEEL THAT
THE BREAKDOWN OF WHAT HAD TO BE A VERY INTRICATE AND HNELICATE
COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK MAY HAVE BEEN A SERIOUS FLAW IN THE VC
MASTER PLAN. COVERT AND COORDINATED, NOT TO MENTION COMPARTMENTED,
MOVEMENT OF SUCH LARGE NUMBERS OF PERSONNEL INTO SAIGON AND THE
OTHER POPULATED AREAS ATTACKED, MUST HAVE PLACED A SEVERE STRAIN
ON AN ALREADY DIFFICULT COMMUNICATION PROBLEM. IN THE EARLY

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OR GANIZATION PHASE THE ENEMY WAS ABLE TO BENEFIT GREATLY FROM
THE RELAXED ATMOSPHERE OF TET, A PERIOD WHEN THERE IS MUCH
MOVEMENT IN THE CITY. BUT THESE FRAGILE COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS
MUST HAVE BROKEN DOWN FAIRLY RAPIDLY TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE
ATTACKING FORCE.

- 3. THE LACK OF SUFFICIENT AREA KNOWLEDGE BY THOSE MEMBERS
 OF THE ATTACK FORCE NOT INDIGENOUS TO SAIGON WAS NOT SUFFICIENTLY
 CONSIDERED. AFTER INDIGENOUS LEADERS WERE KILLED, OTHERS IN THE
 ATTACK FORCE MADE SERIOUS ERRORS DUE TO A LACK OF PROPER AREA
 KNOWLEDGE, LEADING TO THEIR CAPTURE OR DESTRUCTION.
- 4. THE MAJOR FLAW IN GIAP'S PLAN WAS LACK OF TRUE APPRECIATION FOR THE FEELINGS OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE. PROBABLY VC CADRES FROM SAIGON AND ELSEWHERE HAD CONVINCED THE DRV THAT THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE WERE SO DISCONTENTED WITH THE THIEU/KY GOVERNMENT THAT THEY WOULD RISE UP AND WELCOME THE INVADERS AS COMRADES IN ARMS, ESPECIALLY IF THE INVADERS COULD MAKE AN IMPRESSIVE SHOW OF FORCE. THE TOTAL LACK OF SUPPORT MAY CAUSE THE DRV TO REEVALUATE ITS PRESENT POSITION IN THE SOUTH.
- 5. A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF INFLUENTIAL VIETNAMESE THINK
 THIS MAY HAVE BEEN A LAST GASP EFFORT BY THE VC AND THEIR DRV

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ALLIES. THEY POINT OUT THAT MOST BRILLIANT LAST GASP EFFORTS
SUCH AS THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN AND MANY OF THE MOVES OF FIELD
MARSHAL ROMMEL WERE STAGED "BECAUSE IT WAS THE ONLY COURSE
OF ACTION OPEN TO THEM AT THAT PARTICULAR TIME IN HISTORY". IN
BRIEF, IT IS ALTOGETHER POSSIBLE THAT GIAP ORDERED THE ATTACK NOT
BECAUSE HE FELT THAT HE WAS OPERATING FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH,
BUT BECAUSE HE WAS OPERATING FROM A POSITION OF DESPERATION.

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